

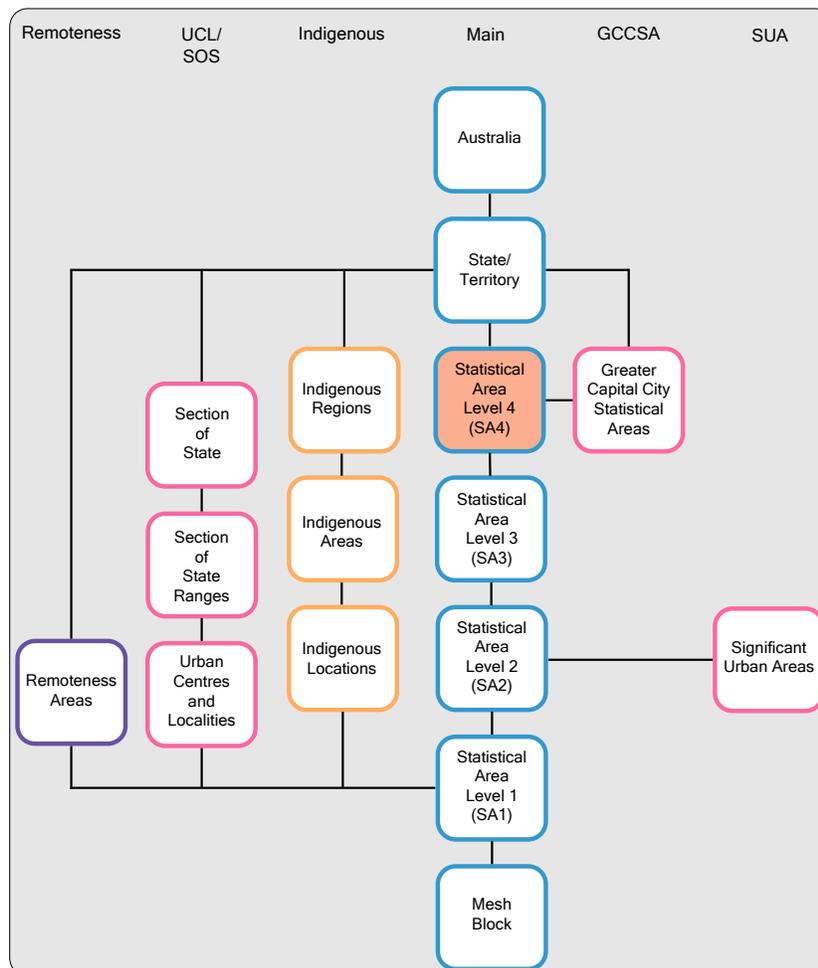
STATISTICAL AREAS LEVEL 4 (SA4s)

What are SA4s?

Statistical Areas Level 4 (SA4s) are geographical areas that will replace the current Labour Force Regions and be used for the output of a variety of regional data, including the Labour Force Survey and 2011 Census Data.

There are 106 SA4s covering the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps. They are built up from whole SA3s. The SA4 regions are the largest sub-State regions in the Main Structure of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). Whole SA4s aggregate to Greater Capital City Statistical Areas and State and Territory.

Diagram 1: ASGS ABS Structures



What criteria were used to define the SA4s?

SA4s are designed to provide a sub-state breakdown of Australia. They are specifically designed for the release of regional labour force data. In regional areas, SA4s tend to have populations of between 100,000 to 300,000 people. In metropolitan areas, SA4s tend to have larger populations (300,000 – 500,000 people). These large populations are required to ensure the quality of data from the labour force sample survey.

Labour markets identified through an analysis of 2006 Census travel to work data were the key consideration in the design of SA4s.

By reflecting labour markets, the labour force data from any particular SA4 is likely to be more relevant to both labour supply (where people live) and demand (where people work) since the SA4 will contain a high percentage of people who live and work in the same SA4.

How do the SA4s differ from the current Labour Force Regions?

In the larger capital cities, SA4s represent sub-labour markets within the larger city wide labour market. They can be added together to create a socio-economic definition of the entire capital city labour market which includes the outlying commuting regions of each city.

SA4s have also been designed to represent the labour markets of the largest regional cities such as Wollongong, Bendigo and Townsville. Many of these cities are not currently individually identified by Labour Force Regions (LFRs) and in these cases SA4s will, for the first time, present specific labour force data on these cities labour markets.

In outer regional and remote areas, labour markets tend to be small and localised around regional towns. SA4s in these areas represent aggregations of these labour markets based on geographical, social and economic similarities. Currently LFRs in regional and remote areas tend to combine these areas with major regional cities and even outlying parts of the capital cities. This makes it difficult to develop a picture of the labour force activity in remote and regional areas as they are heavily influenced by major city labour market characteristics. However SA4s which contain only remote and regional areas will enable a picture of regional and remote labour force activity to be presented.

What data will be available on SA4s?

SA4s will be the smallest area for general release Labour Force data. Some other survey data may also be available on SA4s. A range of 2011 Census of Population and Housing is available at the SA4 level.

The '**ASGS Implementation Schedule for ABS Publications**' chapter of the ABS Statistical Geography website (<http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>) provides a summary of ABS publications and the schedule for their release to SA4s. The webpage includes the release schedule for Labour Force publications.

Where can I get the SA4 boundaries?

The SA4 boundaries are available in MapInfo Interchange and ESRI Shapefile formats and can be downloaded from the '**ABS Geography Publications**' chapter of the ABS Statistical Geography website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

Alternatively, SA4 digital boundaries are available through the '**Downloads**' tab of the ASGS Main Structures online publication: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.001).

The publication includes a manual, maps of the main structure regions SA2 and above, and complete lists of the various regions of the ASGS and their hierarchical relationships.

Where can I get further information?

A detailed discussion of the SA4s and the criteria used in their design can be found in the online publication: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.001).

An outline of the consultation process for the design process for SA4s is available in the online information paper : [Australian Statistical Geography Standard: Design of the Statistical Areas Level 4, Capital Cities and Statistical Areas Level 3, May 2010](#) (cat. no. 1216.0.55.003).

More information on the ASGS and ABS Statistical Geography can be found by visiting the ABS website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

Any questions or comments can be emailed to geography@abs.gov.au